

A. Background

BLM Office: Arctic Field Office LLAKF010

Lease/Serial/Case File No.: FF096950

Applicant: Mr. John Pearce
USGS Alaska Science Center
Glenn Olds Hall
4210 University Drive
Anchorage, Alaska 99508

Dates of Proposed Activity: March 15, 2015 – May 1, 2015

Proposed Action Title/Type: USGS Conex Removal Project/Right-of-Way

Description of Proposed Action: The USGS Alaska Science Center is proposing to cross BLM managed lands to reach the sites identified in ROW FF095789 as Chipp South, Chipp North, and Garry Creek and remove the conex's in place at each site in the spring of 2015. Completion of this action will facilitate termination of the ROW's at the Chipp South, Chipp North and Garry Creek sites. As part of this action, one of the pre-furbished conex's will be placed at the BLM Ikpikpuk #1 fuel site, one will be placed within the existing USGS ROW at Point Lonely and the third will be removed from BLM lands. The proposed action involves a single visit to each site with the minimum equipment to load and remove each conex. Cruz Construction, Inc. (Cruz) has been contracted to perform the work.

Cruz construction has already established a packed trail and a partial camp at Lake 654 for NordAq and the equipment to be used in this proposed action is located at the NordAq camp. Access for the proposed action would utilize the already established trails and new trails would only be established as necessary from the closest point on the existing trail system. The route follows the existing packed trail with new trails established to access the Chipp South, Chipp North and Garry Creek sites (Figure 1). All equipment associated with the project would be demobilized to Deadhorse over the already established route to 2P.

Equipment list for proposed project:

- 2 case Steiger quadtracs
- 1 track trailer
- 1 Delta fuel pump trailer

The Delta fuel pump trailer has four tundra tires with a fixed mounted 2500 gallon capacity tank. It is equipped with primary as well as secondary shutoff valves, a 12 volt 15 gallon a minute pump with artic grade fuel hose and nozzle. There is also a 1" ball valve as a secondary shutoff on the end of the fuel hose. Fuel will be transported in this tank for equipment refueling purposes. There is a spill response container on this tank as well as secondary containments which will be placed under valves and Steiger tanks prior to fueling. It is likely refueling will

occur only one time and if possible it will be done at the BLM Ikpihpuk fuel site. No fuel storage is anticipated for this project.

No use of fresh water is anticipated.

Minimal waste is expected to be generated as a result of the proposed action. All solid waste will be removed from the area.

Cruz provided details on their procedure to assure that all equipment is properly maintained, inspected for leaks and serviceability, cleaned of all organic material, and prepared appropriately for remote service. All equipment is steam cleaned at their Deadhorse heated indoor shop prior to use. Accordingly all equipment used in the proposed action is already operating in the NPR-A under an approved weed management plan and has been cleaned.

Given that this activity is proposed to occur near the coast polar bears may be encountered. Grizzly/brown bears are unlikely to be active in the winter. In order to minimize any potential impacts to polar bears the applicant will follow all polar bear specific stipulations as listed in the Project Specific Stipulations section of the Stipulations document that will accompany this document.

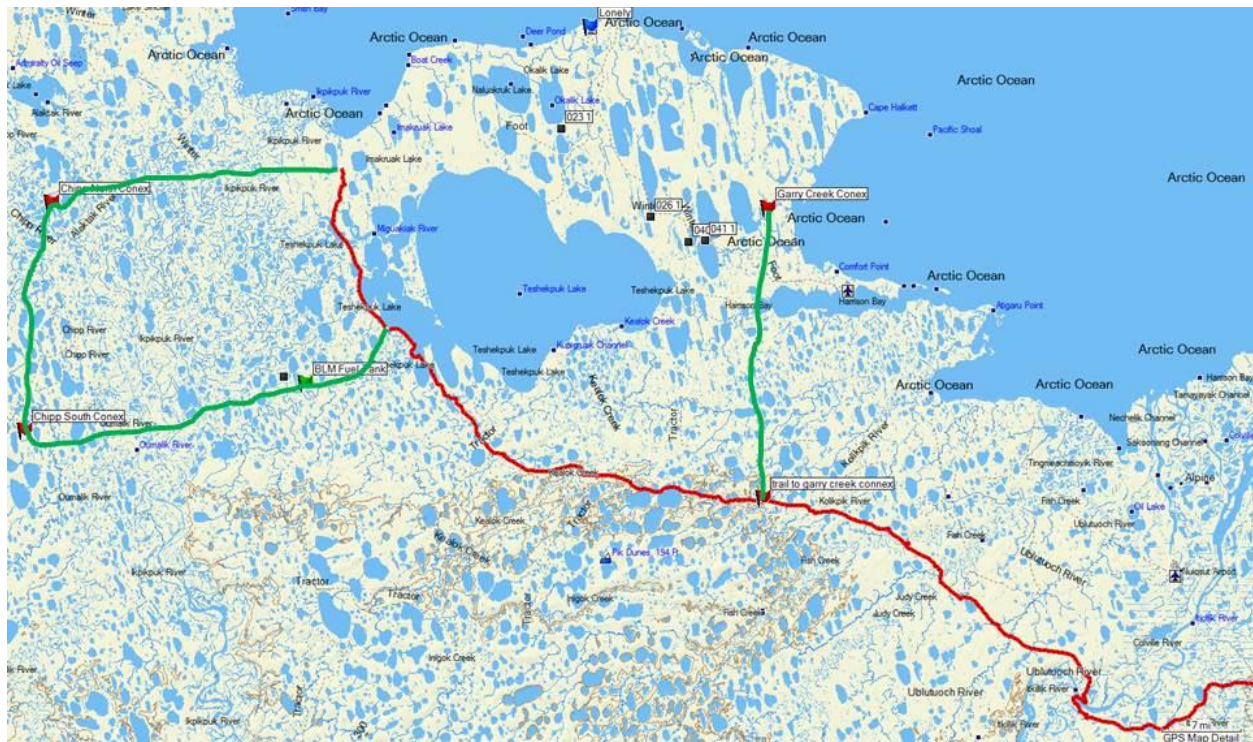


Figure 1. Access route for the Chipp South, Chipp North and Garry Creek conex removal. Red is previously established trail. Green is new trail.

Site Legal Description:

Legal Description of Project Area (All Umiat Meridian)

Route from Primary trail to Chipp North and Chipp South

Township	Range	Sections	Notes
14 North	8 West	31	Northern fork from primary trail
13 North	8 West	6-7	
13 North	9 West	12-14, 20-23, 29-30	
13 North	10 West	25-28, 31-33	BLM fuel tank
13 North	11 West	35-36	
12 North	11 West	4-5, 7-8	
12 North	12 West	10-18	
12 North	13 West	13-15, 19-22	
12 North	14 West	3, 10, 15, 23, 24	Chipp South Conex
13 North	14 West	1, 12, 13, 24, 25, 35, 36	
14 North	14 West	1, 11-14, 24, 25, 36	
15 North	14 West	36	
15 North	13 West	3-8, 18, 19, 30, 31	Chipp North Conex
16 North	13 West	25-27, 34	
16 North	12 West	22-24, 26-30	
16 North	11 West	19-24	
16 North	10 West	19-24	
16 North	9 West	19-21	Southern fork from primary trail

Route from primary trail north to Garry Creek

Township	Range	Section	Notes
11 North	3 West	2, 11	Fork from primary trail
12 North	3 West	2, 3, 11, 14, 23, 26, 35	
13 North	3 West	2, 3, 10, 15, 22, 27, 34	
14 North	3 West	2, 11, 14, 15, 22, 26, 27, 34, 35	
15 North	3 West	1, 12, 13, 23, 24, 26, 35	Garry Creek Conex

Route to 2P Pad

MTP ID	Township	Range	BLM Managed Land Sections	Non BLM Managed Land Sections	Notes
A-1	8 North	7 East	None	All	TH-1
A-2	8 North	6 East	None	All	--
A-3	8 North	5 East	None	All	Itkilik River
A-4	8 North	4 East	2-10, 18	1-2, 10-36	Colville River
A-5	8 North	3 East	1-4, 10-15	3-10, 13-36	TH-2, Colville River, Ocean Pt.

A-6	9 North	3 East	1-36	31-32	Colville River
A-7	9 North	2 East	1-36	35, 36	TH-3, Ublutuooh River, Colville River
A-8	9 North	1 East	1-36	None	--
A-9	10 North	1 East	1-36	None	TH-4, Judy Creek, Fish Creek
A-10	10 North	1 West	1-36	None	TH-5, Fish Creek, Judy Creek
A-11	11 North	1 West	1-36	None	Fish Creek, Kalikpik River, West Fish Creek Legacy Well Sec 2 & 11
A-12	11 North	2 West	1-36	None	TH-6, Kalikpik River
A-13	11 North	3 West	1-36	None	Kalikpik River
A-14	11 North	4 West	1-36	None	Kalikpik River, North Kalkikpik Legacy Well
A-15a	11 North	5 West	1-36	None	TH-7, Kealok Creek
A-15b	12 North	5 West	1-36	None	TH-7, Kealok Creek
A-16	11 North	6 West	1-36	None	TH-7, Kealok Creek
A-17	12 North	6 West	1-36	None	TH-7, Kealok Creek
A-18	12 North	7 West	1-36	None	--
A-18a	12 North	9 West	1-36	None	--
A-19	13 North	7 West	1-36	None	Teshekpuk Lake
A-20	13 North	8 West	1-36	None	TH-8, Unnamed Stream, Teshekpuk Lake
A-20a	13 North	9 West	1-36	None	--
A-21	14 North	8 West	1-36	None	Teshekpuk Lake
A-22	15 North	8 West	1-36	None	Teshekpuk Lake
A-23	15 North	9 West	1-36	7,8,9,21,22,27,28	Miguakiak River
A-24	16 North	9 West	1-36	24,25	TH-9,TH-10, Smith Bay

B. Land Use Plan Conformance Review

The proposed action is in conformance with the following planning document: National Petroleum Reserve-Alaska Integrated Activity Plan/Environmental Impact Statement (IAP/EIS) dated November 2012 and associated Record of Decision dated February 2013.

The proposed action is in conformance with the Naval Petroleum Reserves Production Act, which allows for the authorization of uses consistent with the purposes of the Act.

C. Compliance with NEPA

The IAP/EIS Record of Decisions for the NPR-A developed stipulations and best management practices applicable to all activities in NPR-A. The stipulations and best management practices applicable to the proposed action will be provided, along with project-specific mitigation, to the applicant and are entitled: “FF096950USGS Conex Removal Project Stipulations”.

The Proposed Action is categorically excluded from further documentation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in accordance with 516 DM 2, Appendix 1, or 516 DM 11.9. Specifically, the proposed action meets the criteria for a categorical exclusion under 516 DM 9.5, USGS Environmental Quality Programs National Environmental Policy Act Chapter 9 Managing the NEPA Process – U.S. Geological.

“Minor, routine, or preventive maintenance activities at USGS facilities and lands, and geological, hydrological, or geophysical data collection stations.”

This categorical exclusion is appropriate in this situation because there are no extraordinary circumstances potentially having effects that may significantly affect the environment. The proposed action has been reviewed, and none of the extraordinary circumstances described in 516 DM 2 apply.

The proposed action has been reviewed to determine if any of the exceptions described in 43 CFR 46.210 and 46.215, apply.

The proposed action will not meet any of the extraordinary circumstances listed below.

Extraordinary Circumstances	Yes	No
2.1 Have significant impacts on public health or safety.		X
2.2 Have significant impacts on such natural resources and unique geographic characteristics as historic or cultural resources; park, recreation or refuge lands; wilderness areas; wild or scenic rivers; national natural landmarks; sole or principal drinking water aquifers; prime farmlands; wetlands (Executive Order 11990); floodplains (Executive Order 11988); national monuments; migratory birds; and other ecologically significant or critical areas.		X
2.3 Have highly controversial environmental effects or involve unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources [NEPA Section 102(2) (E)].		X
2.4 Have highly uncertain and potentially significant environmental effects or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.		X
2.5 Establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.		X
2.6 Have a direct relationship to other actions with individually insignificant but cumulatively significant environmental effects.		X
2.7 Have significant impacts on properties listed, or eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places as determined by either the bureau or office.		X

2.8 Have significant impacts on species listed, or proposed to be listed, on the List of Endangered or Threatened Species or have significant impacts on designated Critical Habitat for these species.		X
2.9 Violate a Federal law, or a State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.		X
2.10 Have a disproportionately high and adverse effect on low income or minority populations (Executive Order 12898).		X
2.11 Limit access to and ceremonial use of Indian sacred sites on Federal lands by Indian religious practitioners or significantly adversely affect the physical integrity of such sacred sites (Executive Order 13007).		X
2.12 Contribute to the introduction, continued existence, or spread of noxious weeds or non-native invasive species known to occur in the area or actions that may promote the introduction, growth, or expansion of the range of such species (Federal Noxious Weed Control Act and Executive Order 13112).		X

D. Approval and Contact Information

I considered the proposed action and have determined that there is no potential for significant impacts.

/s/
 Stacie McIntosh
 Authorized Officer, Arctic Field Office

3/11/2015
 Date

Contact Person:

For additional information concerning this CX review, contact:

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